AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Listing of Claims

The following listing of claims will replace all prior listings or versions thereof:

1. (Previously presented) A method of identifying a compound which comprises assaying a compound for its ability to decrease the binding affinity of carboxyl ester lipase (CEL) to a receptor selected from the group consisting of vascular proteoglycans, scavenger receptors, AGE receptors, lipoprotein lipase, apolipoproteins, lipoproteins and lipoprotein particles.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Withdrawn) A method for reducing the retention of atherogenic lipoproteins in atherogenesis comprising the administration of an effective amount of a modulator of the binding affinity of CEL to a receptor.

4. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising measuring the ability of a test compound that decreases the binding affinity of CEL to a receptor selected from the group consisting of vascular proteoglycans, scavenger receptors, AGE receptors, lipoprotein lipase, apolipoproteins, lipoproteins and lipoprotein particles to reduce the retention of atherogenic lipoproteins, and selecting an active compound that is able to reduce the retention of atherogenic lipoproteins.

5. (Withdrawn) Use of a modulator of the binding affinity of CEL to a receptor as an agent able to reduce the retention of atherogenic lipoproteins in atherogenesis and thereby preventing or treating atherosclerosis.

6. (Withdrawn) A method of preventing or treating atherosclerosis which method comprises administering to a patient in need thereof a pharmaceutically effective amount of an agent able to reduce the retention of atherogenic lipoproteins and thereby preventing or treating atherosclerosis.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Withdrawn) Use of an agent able to reduce the retention of atherogenic lipoproteins by modulating the binding affinity of CEL to a receptor in preparation of a medicament for the prevention or treatment of atherosclerosis.

9. (Withdrawn) A method of preparing a pharmaceutical composition which comprises: (i) identifying an agent as useful for reducing the retention of atherogenic lipoproteins in atherogenesis according to claim 1; and (ii) mixing the agent or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof with a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient or diluent.

10. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the receptor is a scavenger receptor selected from the group consisting of SR-A types I, II and III, MARCO, SR-BI, CD36, SR-C1, SR-D, Macrosialin/CD86, SR-E, LOX-1 (lectin-like ox-LDL receptor), SR-F, SREC-1, SR-PSOX, FEEL-1 and FEEL-2.

11. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the receptor is an AGE receptor selected from the group consisting of RAGE, 80K-H, OST48 and Galectin-3.

12. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the receptor is an apolipoprotein selected from the group consisting of apo A-I, apo A-II, apo B-100, apo B-48, apo C-I, apo C-II, apo C-III, and apo E.

13. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the receptor is a lipoprotein or lipoprotein particle selected from the group consisting of:

(a) the intermediate-density lipoproteins IDL1, IDL2 and IDL3,

(b) the low density lipoproteins LDL1, LDL2 and LDL3, and

(c) the high-density lipoproteins preβ-HDL, α-HDL, HDL1, HDL2, and HDL3.

14. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein assaying comprises measuring receptor binding by CEL using chromatographic methods with CEL as the stationary phase.

15. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein assaying comprises measuring receptor binding by CEL using chromatographic methods with the receptor as the stationary phase.

16. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein assaying comprises measuring receptor binding of CEL to cells expressing the receptor on their surface.

17. (Previously presented) The method of claim 16, wherein assaying comprises measuring binding of labeled CEL.

18. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein assaying comprises measuring receptor binding by CEL using scintillation proximity and ultracentrafugation.

19. (Previously presented) The method of claim 18, wherein assaying comprises measuring binding of labeled CEL.

20. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein assaying comprises measuring receptor binding by CEL to vascular tissue.

21. (Previously presented) The method of claim 20, wherein assaying comprises measuring binding of labeled CEL.